

## METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATICALLY DISSEMINATING INFORMATION OVER A NETWORK

### Abstract of the Disclosure

An information distribution program (36) is provided for automatically  
5 distributing information over a network (24) connecting a plurality of  
computers (15). Each computer (15) is installed with the information distribution  
program (36), which comprises a family construction module (44), a publication  
module (40), a subscription module (42), and an information tree (46). The  
10 information tree (46) stores the most recent information available to the  
computer (15). The family construction module (44) organizes the various  
computers (15) connected to the network (24) into immediate and extended families  
of related computers (15). The publication module (40) automatically distributes,  
"publishes" or "pushes" the information to the immediate and extended family  
15 members of a computer (15) which have shown an interest in the information. The  
subscription module (42) provides a computer (15) with the ability to show interest in  
or "subscribe" to information located on the computers (15) connected to the  
network (24).